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## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Division of Agriculture**

### **2009 Alaska State Fair Farm Family of the Year Announced**

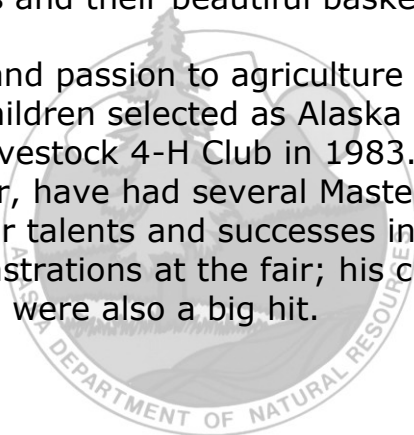
(Anchorage, AK) – The Oberg-Kenley Family of Palmer has been selected the 2009 Farm Family of the Year by the Alaska agriculture community. The Palmer family will be honored at the Fair Board of Director's reception on opening day of the Fair, Thursday August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

June & Clyde Oberg began selling milk to Matanuska Maid from their Fishhook Dairy farm in 1954. On 160 acres they raised their own hay and wet silage, milking an average of 35 cows a day until 1973. Daughter Carol (Oberg) Kenley and her five brothers and sisters all grew up with an appreciation for farm work, home gardening, and family values. They all helped to make the farm successful, from milking cows and driving tractors to weeding the families' extensive garden.

Carol and her seven children rejuvenated farming on the Oberg-Kenley acreage in the mid 80's. When Carol's daughter Amy was 13 years old she began selling vegetable baskets to nine customers with a weekly delivery route – similar to the Community Supported Agriculture operations of today. Amy carried on this tradition for six years and then younger sister Rachel took over until 2008. Over the years the Kenley Vegetable Baskets were serving up to 30 families with fresh, delicious produce from the family greenhouse and garden.

In 2008 Carol & Rachel transitioned to Farmers Market sales, attending the South Anchorage Farmers Market on Wednesday's and the Palmer Friday Fling. They are known for their wide variety of unique vegetables and their beautiful basket displays.

The family has demonstrated their commitment and passion to agriculture for generations. June & Clyde have had five grandchildren selected as Alaska State FFA President. Carol launched "The Winners Circle" livestock 4-H Club in 1983. They host the Petting Zoo each year at the Alaska State Fair, have had several Master Showman selected from their group, and are known for their talents and successes in the show ring. For years Clyde held popular tractor demonstrations at the fair; his cream separating and ice cream making demonstrations were also a big hit.



The Oberg-Kenley gang is well known and respected in their community; Clyde has been a member of the local Lions Club for over 35 years. The family is also very active in the LDS church.

Carol points out that they have never considered themselves farmers in the traditional sense, “we just have a garden that is out of control,” she states. Carol plans to continue with their farmer’s market presence in the near future; she is expanding her greenhouse production even though youngest daughter Rachel is off to Utah State to study Agriculture Communications this fall.

The Farm Family of the Year award, sponsored by the Matanuska Valley Federal Credit Union, was established by the Fair in 2000 to honor an Alaska farming family and show appreciation for all the hard working Alaskan’s committed to agriculture in the State.

Nominations are accepted annually, and a committee chaired by the Division of Agriculture selects the winning family based on production of quality Alaska Grown products, community and agricultural organization involvement, and overall image. “The Oberg-Kenley Family continues their 55 year tradition and remains actively involved in the promotion, education, and outreach of agriculture in Alaska. Whether it be the humorous recount of days gone by, the trials and tribulations of the early years, or just a casual gardening conversation, the passion and commitment of this family is undeniable!” says Franci Havemeister, Director of the Division of Agriculture.

Previous Farm Family winners include the Huppert Family (2000), the VanderWeele Family (2001), Havemeister Farms (2002), Rempel Family Farm (2003), P & M Gardens (2004), Calypso Farm & Ecology Center (2005), Wrigley Farms (2006), Insanity Acres (2007), and the Brad Lewis Family (2008).

For more information please visit [www.alaskastatefair.org](http://www.alaskastatefair.org) or contact Kris Knapp, Fair Marketing Assistant at (907) 746-7164 or [marketing@alaskastatefair.org](mailto:marketing@alaskastatefair.org)

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